

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: MARR, SP, US

SUBJ: SPANISH BASE NEGOTIATIONS - ROUND 10: PRESS REACTION

REF: MADRID 6539; MADRID 6541; MADRID 6542

SUMMARY: HEAVY SPANISH PRESS REACTION OVER PAST 5 DAYS TO
ROUND 10 OF BASE NEGOTIATIONS AND TO IMPENDING EXPIRATION OF
EXISTING AGREEMENT HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY CONSIDERABLE
PATRIOTIC FERVOR. DEMANDS FOR EQUALITY OF TREATMENT AND A
BETTER BALANCE OF BENEFITS AND RISKS IN THE FORM OF A SECURITY
GUARANTEE HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZED. ROUND 10 HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED
AS ESSENTIALLY A FAILURE BECAUSE OF AMERICAN INABILITY OF
UNWILLINGNESS TO MEET SPANISH DEMANDS ON THIS AND ON THE
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QUESTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE. AT THE SAME TIME THERE HAVE

BEEN VARIOUS REFERENCES TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT CORTINA'S MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY SEPT 22 COULD PRODUCE A NEW START. FIRMNESS IS GENERALLY RECOMMENDED AS THE APPROPRIATE SPANISH POSTURE IN THE NEXT PHASE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, SINCE IT IS CONCLUDED THAT THE SPANISH ARE NEGOTIATING FROM STRENGTH. SUGGESTIONS THAT CORTINA WILL OFFER A BRIEF EXTENSION OF THE CURRENT AGREEMENT HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN CATEGORICALLY DENIED BY SOURCES CLOSE TO CORTINA. AT THE SAME TIME, IT HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR HERE THAT EXPIRATION DOES NOT MEAN THE IMMEDIATE DISMANTLING OF THE BASES. NO ONE HAS YET FOCUSED ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EXPIRATION OF THE NONMILITARY ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. PICKING UP ON A STORY CARRIED SEPT 20 BY "ABC" (MADRID 6541), THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT'S DAILY "ARRIBA" CARRIED HEADLINE STORY SEPT 21 STATING IT APPEARED CORTINA WOULD OFFER A BRIEF EXTENSION, WHICH COULD BE FOR ONE MONTH. IN TERMS STRONGLY CRITICAL OF THE US, THE PAPER'S NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT, FELIX ORGEGA, STATED THAT SUCH A SPANISH GESTURE TO SAVE FACE FOR THE US COULD BECOME A VICTORY FOR THE US IN THE NEGOTIATIONS VIA A US CAMPAIGN TO PRESSURE GOS. WHILE STATING THAT THE BASES ARE VITAL FOR THE US AND NATO, HE CHARGED THAT TOTAL SILENCE IN THE US PRESS REGARDING ROUND 10 IS AN INDICATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES. "ARRIBA" ACCOMPANIED THIS WITH A SOFTER EDITORIAL CLAIMING IT WAS INCORRECT TO TALK OF RUPTURE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

2. THE MORNING PRESS OF SEPT 22 CARRIES A SPANISH WIRE SERVICE REPORT STATING THAT SOURCES CLOSE TO CORTINA, PRIOR TO EMBARKING AT MADRID'S AIRPORT FOR NEW YORK, ISSUED A CATEGORICAL DENIAL OF THE STORY THAT CORTINA MIGHT WELL OFFER AN EXTENSION. THESE SOURCES ADDED THAT EXPIRATION WOULD BE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO CONTINUING THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A POSSIBLE AGREEMENT DURING THE NEXT YEAR. A SEPARATE SPANISH WIRE SERVICE FROM NEW YORK, REPORTING CORTINA'S ARRIVAL SEPT 21, HAS WELL-INFORMED SOURCES REPORTING THAT "THERE WILL BE NO LIMITATIONS ON THE DISCUSSION" WITH THE SECRETARY. SPANISH DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES ALSO STATED, THIS REPORT SAYS, THAT "THE INTERPRETATION OF ARTICLE 39 OF THE PRESENT AGREEMENT IS A MATTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND NO ONE ELSE."

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3. APPARENTLY CORTINA ALSO STATED AT THE TIME OF HIS DEPARTURE FROM MADRID THAT THE RUMOR OF RECENT DAYS REGARDING VARIOUS CHANGES AMONG HIGH OFFICIALS IN HIS DEPARTMENT WAS UNFOUNDED. (SEPT 19'S "ABC", FOR ONE, CARRIED AN ARTICLE BY PEDRO CRESPO STATING THAT THE RUMORED REMOVAL OF ROVIRA (WHETHER ONLY AS NEGOTIATOR OR ALSO AS UNDER SECRETARY WAS UNCLEAR) WOULD, IF CARRIED OUT, BE A RECOGNITION OF SOME FAILURE IN THE

NEGOTIATIONS.) THERE HAS NOT BEEN MUCH ATENTION GIVEN TO SUCH RUMORS BY THE PRESS THUS FAR.

4. A FULLER ACCOUNT OF ROVIRA'S OWN STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS UPON HIS RETURN TO MADRID, AS CARRIED IN BARCELONA'S "VANGUARDIA," HAS HIM STATING SIMPLY: THERE HAS BEEN NO AGREEMENT; THE TALKS HAVE NOT BEEN BROKEN OFF; ARTICLE 39 WILL ENTER INTO EFFECT UPON THE CURRENT AGREEMENT'S EXPIRATION, BUT PERMITTING WORKING ON UNTIL A NEW AGREEMENT IS REACHED; IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, THAT HE REMAINED OPTIMISTIC SINCE BOTH SIDES SEEK AGREEMENT. THE ONLY REFERENCE THUS FAR TO COMMENTS BY US OFFICIALS IS CONTAINED IN THE SAME NEWSPAPER'S REPORT ATHAT US SOURCES EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THERE WOULD BE AN AGREEMTN ALLOWING CONTINUED USE OF US FACILITIES IN SPAIN, OR AT LEAST SOME OF THESE FACILITIES. THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT'S WIRE SERVICE (PYRESA) ALSO QUOTES "NEWSWEEKS'S" DE BORCHGRAVE AS STATING THE US GOT THE BASES VERY CHEAP AND PRESENT SPANISH DEMANDS ARE LEGITIMATE. HE REPORTEDLY RECOMMENDED TO THE SPANISH THAT THEY NOT RENEW THE PRESENT AGREEMENT, BUT AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS.

5. THERE ARE VARIOUS REFERENCES THROUHOUT THE REPORTING OF RECENT DAYS TO THE EXPECTIATION THAT, WHILEL IN THE NEXT PHASE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS THE SPANISH POSITION SHOULD BE A TOUGH ONE, THERE IS STILL ADEQUATE TIME TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. CONGRESS AND NATO ARE SEEN AS WASHINGTON'S PROBLEMS. SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION IS PICTURED AS ANTIBASES BUT NOT ANTI-US. THE EMPHASIS IN ALL THIS REPORTING ON EQUALITY OF TREATMENT, AS EXPRESSED IN THE 1974 DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, SMAKS OF BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS BY SOURCES REASONABLY CLOSE TO CORTINA.
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